

The South Sea Islanders who escaped the tidal wave literally "took to the tall timber" by climbing coconut trees.

It is stated that in Persia they regard the United States as a new world under a new rule. The Shah's notions of geography are so crude that he imagined America could be reached by railroad. He won't travel by sea, which is a good thing for us.

The valuable rubber bearing territory of Aere is the bone of contention between Brazil, Bolivia and Peru. The wealth of some countries has proved to be their misfortune. The Philadelphia Public Ledger, American capitalists are extensively interested in concessions granted to their syndicate in Aere, and this may possibly bring the United States into the contention in a certain contingency.

According to a statistician the defaultations in the United States during the year 1902 are as follows: Federal and State, \$62,357; municipal, \$439,432; transportation companies, \$160,225; building, saving and loan associations, \$22,441; insurance companies, \$116,450; benevolent associations, \$169,775; banks, \$1,509,291; court trusts, \$801,807; commercial corporations and firms, \$2,373,529; miscellaneous, \$311,490. Total defaultations in 1902, \$6,023,510; total in 1901, \$7,731,250.

Canada papers assert that the rumors concerning the boycotting by British officers of Canadians who have received commissions in the British Army have been fully confirmed. Antagonistic incidents are cited where Canadians have been told by their commanding officers that their devotion to duty was bad form and could not be allowed to inconvenience their brother officers. The result has been that a majority of the Canadians are applying for exchange into the Egyptian, West Indian and African regiments, where work is the fashion.

A frightful epidemic of a mysterious disease described as "the sleeping sickness" which has long been known along the sickly west coast of Africa, has broken out in Uganda, and tens of thousands of the natives are reported being carried off by it. This is the first appearance of the disease in any part of Africa except the west coast, so far as known, and some fear exists that it may find its way into Europe, the construction of railroads having made its transmission possible. No remedy has yet been discovered for the disease, which works on its victim insidiously, the first symptoms being extreme languor. It then passes through regular stages of drowsiness, stupor, coma and death.

The Philadelphia Record remarks that there is a crying demand for legislation in Pennsylvania and in all other States of the Union on the subject of desertion. The women who have been deserted by their husbands without means of support, and in most cases burdened by families of helpless children, are numbered by thousands. In one year five cases were brought to the notice of the organized charities of Philadelphia, and these probably constituted only a fraction of the whole number. Many of the sufferers prefer to endure their lot in silence and shun the scandal of publicity. The remedies provided by existing laws are wholly inadequate. The courts may order the recalcitrant to pay a weekly stipend to his abandoned wife, but such orders are habitually set at naught by the delinquent, who may go into hiding or simply take up his residence in another jurisdiction. Desertion ought to be made a criminal offense, and the deserters of families made amenable to extradition and other processes which are effective across and beyond State boundaries. A bill to this effect should be enacted in every State as speedily as possible.

The Supreme Court of Ohio, in the case of the State vs. Shaw, lays down the doctrine that to acquire a property right in animals ferre naturae, so that they may be the subject of larceny, the pursuer must bring them into his power and control, so that he may subject them to his own use at his pleasure, and must maintain his possession and control, so as to indicate that he does not intend to abandon them again to the world at large, but in cases where larceny is charged the law does not require absolute security against the possibility of escape. It is accordingly held that when fish are inclosed in a net, or in any other inclosed place which is private property, from which they may be taken at any time at the pleasure of the owner of the net or inclosure, the taking of them therefrom with felonious intent will be larceny. The court says in part: "Fish are ferre naturae, yet, where the animals or other creatures are not domestic, but are ferre naturae, larceny may notwithstanding be committed of them, if they are fit for food of man, and dead, reclaimed (and known to be so) or confined. Thus * * * fish in a tank or net, or, as it seems, in any other inclosed place which is private property, and where they may be taken at any time at the pleasure of the owner * * * the taking of them with felonious intent will be larceny. Fish confined in a tank or net are sufficiently secured."

BALLADE OF PROCRASTINATION.

The tender young twig that we bend in hope of its growing straight. At times shows a quite crooked trend. With symptoms of cancer and blight, And seems just about to descend. Consider it near to its end; But nearly is better than quite— It is never too late to mend.

One time, though too often we spend, Most badly; though duties we slight, And seem just about to descend. From quite a respectable height, Though prospects seem gloomy at night, Or their betterment, still we may mend. Our sweet way at length to the light— It is never too late to mend.

At least to the eye of a friend, The black may bleach out of the white; If not, to some passable blend. That looks just as well at first sight. Some fortune surely is nigh. A cheery-to-morrow may send. Though you may consider this trite, It is never too late to mend.

LENOXI.
Prize, virtue would seem to invite; Returning I saw it instead. Let me, though time take its flight, It is never too late to mend.—Chicago News.

AN ARMY MERCURY

The Story of an Undelivered Love Letter.

THE Major's son had made his tenth round that morning. He knew it was ten, for hadn't Miss Daily taught him to count that many? He was thinking of the red and black beads on the wires now as he walked with his gun on his shoulder. Perhaps it was the little wiggles in the air that reminded him of the beads. Miss Daily told him one day that the little wiggles were heat, Billy knew all about heat, he thought; they had it out there on the islands; it was there that Miss Daily had told him about the wiggles.

Billy's gun grew heavy on his shoulder, but he straightened himself as he thought of young Mr. Hard, just from the Point. He remembered how Mr. Hard had looked on the evening when Billy heard him tell Miss Daily that he was never really, truly, truly, truly in love. He thought that perhaps his shoulder ached because he was only six, and because of the gun. But the gun's duty was self-imposed, and the gun he had asked for in his prayers. Billy trusted on, past the parade ground, past the band stand, to the land in the walk, where it seemed to him, all the strangers from the city stopped and gazed on and on, and sometimes men took off their hats and stood uncovered.

When he came to the Colonel's house Billy lowered his gun and took off his hat, for he saw Miss Daily on the porch.

He knew his reward had come. Miss Daily was alone and would talk to him and would tell him things he was sure no one else knew. That about the wiggles he considered very interesting.

The girl took both of the boy's little hot hands and then pushed back the damp hair from his forehead. This was the one thing that always embarrassed Billy. He almost resented it.

Miss Daily didn't treat young Mr. Hard and the others that way, he reflected. Why did she insult his dignity by treating him as she would Mr. Brown's little son? He thought. No one else should do that. He sat on a straw mat, and Miss Daily's feet and contemplated the bushes on her shawl.

The river down below the Point sparkled in the sunshine, and here and there a white sail caught the light wind that blew.

The hills were green and quiet, and there was no sound but the drone of the bees in the honeysuckle.

The girl spoke to the child now and then, but gazed absently over his head across the river and beyond the green hills, across the prairies and beyond the stretch of ocean.

Perhaps it was the big, bronzed soldier who was trimming the grass by the steps; perhaps it was the little boy at her feet who made it seem so real. Both had been a part in the dream-life over here, beyond the ocean.

There was the row of low roofed houses, the women in white with bared throats, the officers in duck and khaki.

There was the bay where the great Admiral had destroyed a fleet.

Here on the parade ground a battalion was drilling. The men had seen service and their faces were brown and seamed. Only a few weeks before they had lived under tropical skies.

But there beyond the hills the girl saw the same men drilling. In front of his men, the white of his uniform showing against the yellow of the parade ground, was the vision of young Mr. Hard as she had seen him that last day before they sailed.

She had walked home with Billy, she remembered. He had slipped his hand into hers at their parting, and with it a little package of soiled powder. It was in one of his little red-bordered handkerchiefs. She had unwrapped the gift as Billy scampered down the street. She had wondered if sachet powder could fill all the empty corners in any one's heart.

All this seemed so far away. Sometimes she wished she could forget the dream-life over there. The morning the ship had sailed she could see from the deck rail the little group of officers who had come to bid her good-bye. All but one had hurried over the gangway as they saw her. That one had stood and looked expectant. He seemed to be waiting for her to summon him. Miss Daily wished she could forget that part of the dream.

Billy had discovered a piece of preserved ginger in the pocket of his blouse. He asked Miss Daily if she remembered the last time he had worn that suit. Yes, it was "out there," Billy always referred to Manila as "out there."

And would she like to see what else he had in his pocket? Well, there was a piece of tinfoil, smoothed and folded like a kindergarten paper. Could Miss Daily guess where that came from? Mr. Hard had given him that. He took it off of a piece of soap one day when he was shaving. Billy told Miss Daily that he used to help Mr. Hard with his shaving, for Mr. Hard said so. Could Miss Daily guess where that came from?

"That was queer. She had given it to him herself. Could it be that young ladies didn't care for tops? Billy carefully removed a folded handkerchief from the capacious pocket. There was something in it. He was having a heart of three making discoveries. He had not worn this suit for many weeks and its treasure had been forgotten.

Miss Daily looked at the boy unfolded the little handkerchief with its comical red border.

There was a note addressed to Miss Mary Daily.

"What does it say on there, Miss Mary?" the boy asked.

"It says my name," she almost whispered as she saw the writing. "Where did you get that, Billy? Please try to remember."

"By gum!" he said at last. "Mr. Hard gave me that, that last day. Don't you remember, Miss Mary, after the dress parade?" she asked. "After the dress parade?" she asked. "After the dress parade?" she asked. "After the dress parade?" she asked.

"Mr. Hard told me to give that to you. I thought I did, Miss Mary, 'deed I did." And he put the note into her hand.

The girl had already snatched it from its envelope. The dumb misery that had for weeks been growing up in her to her very throat, seemed to vanish as she read.

The words were the few blunt ones of a young soldier:

"My Dear Miss Mary—When I realize that you are to sail to-morrow, and that I am to remain here without you, I am well enough to wish that I might give up my commission and sail with you. Or that I might take you in my arms as I long to do to-day, and run away to the clouds with you, even if it might be against your will.

"Dear, I have never dared to call you that before. I love you, I love you."

"I am only a poor farmer's boy who strayed into West Point. Hadn't you guessed it? When I think of you and your friends I call myself a fool to even dare to hope that you could ever care for me. And yet, to-day, when I think of the days to come, the lonely days without you, I am bold enough to tell you so."

"I shall do this by Billy. He is a noble little chap, and will give it to you at once."

"May I see you to-morrow? If you can't have me come, please write to me this evening. Faithfully yours,

"Robert H. Hard."

The girl sat and looked out beyond the green hills, beyond the ocean, and Billy could not see the radiance in her face.

After a pause he said: "Miss Mary, when you write to Mr. Hard will you send him lots of love, like papa does when he writes to me?"

The girl smiled Billy, protesting, in her arms. "Yes," she whispered. "Yes, like lots of love."—Chicago News.

New Bedford's Pride in Her Whalers.

We have raised a race of men who have gone down to the sea in ships on the most hazardous of enterprises. No men have hourly for a lifetime taken such disastrous chances as our whalers, and their voyages have been frequently crowded with moving accidents, half-breeds, escapes and distressful strokes. And we go to these men, like the fishermen, with a greedy ear to hear of their disasters.

"The whaling vessels of our whaling fleet are kept in log boats, and in a whaleboat with two comrades, and all after. How many of us have perished upon after the manner of the *Arctic*, but it is not there. And we seek out the man whose ship is struck and sunk by a whale in mid-ocean, and who takes to the boats and reaches land after weeks of buffeting, and the men whose ships are crushed in the ice, and their story is as prosaic as the story of the man who goes to the day's work in an electric car. We are thrilled by the boat journey of Dr. Kane, of a tramp in the Arctic ice by Nansen. Last week a man arrived here who had made a boat journey in Hudson Bay as remarkable as the journey of Dr. Kane, and he had nothing to say excepting that it was four weeks and five days from the time he left his ship in a whaleboat with two comrades, and all after. How many of us have perished upon after the manner of the *Arctic*, but it is not there. 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